



## Opportunities for Energy Efficiency Program Sponsors

The ENERGY STAR® Make a Cool Change: Recycle Your Old Fridge (or Freezer) Campaign<sup>1</sup> is an engaging platform for encouraging your customers to get rid of their old, inefficient second refrigerators or freezers. In addition, it can be used to encourage replacement of older primary units with new ENERGY STAR models. By highlighting the recycling message, the campaign reinforces the need to remove old units from the electric grid and dispose of them properly. The goal of this U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-led effort is to lower utility bills, save energy, and protect the environment, with a focus from spring through summer.

### Why Encourage Refrigerator and Freezer Recycling?

**There are still a lot of old refrigerators and freezers out there!** U.S. households have 44.5 million fridges over 10 years old, 12.7 million of which are secondary units, often in basements and garages. And some homes have three fridges! There are even older fridges out there too – of the prior total, 6.1 million primary and 4.1 million second refrigerators are at least 20 years old!<sup>1</sup> Older freezers are also common; 16.9 million homes have freezers that are over 10 years old, representing 44 percent of all freezers.<sup>2</sup> Together these inefficient appliances use \$4.9 billion per year in energy costs.<sup>3</sup>

**Today's models are the most efficient yet.** The federal standard for refrigerators changed significantly in 1993, and then again in 2001. New ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerators must be at least 20 percent more energy efficient than the current federal standard. This means that refrigerators made before 1993 use more than twice the energy of new ENERGY STAR models. New ENERGY STAR qualified freezers must be at least 10 percent more efficient than the minimum federal standard; freezers made before 1993 use nearly twice the energy of new ENERGY STAR models.

**Ensure inefficient fridges and freezers don't end up back on the grid in someone else's house.** When consumers purchase new models, their inefficient units often remain plugged in as second or third units in basements or garages. Some are resold, donated to charity, or given away to others who continue to use them. Properly recycling an inefficient unit permanently shuts it down. Plus, after separation and processing, the steel and other materials can be used to make new products – maybe even a new ENERGY STAR qualified model.

**Make it easier for customers to choose ENERGY STAR.** Promoting replacement of an inefficient unit before it fails increases the chance that the customer selects an ENERGY STAR model. Faced with a warm refrigerator or freezer and a pile of spoiling food, homeowners may rush out to buy the first thing they find. By consciously deciding to replace an inefficient model before it fails, consumers can research options, select the best model for their needs, and look for special deals, even if they have to wait a week for delivery.

### What Can You Do?

1. Use campaign materials and tools to educate your customers about ENERGY STAR refrigerators and freezers, and the benefits of recycling their old ones.



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2. Integrate campaign messaging and promotional ideas into your existing refrigerator and freezer rebate program, and/or recycling bounty program.
3. If you don't currently have a recycling program, consider launching a new incentive program for refrigerator and freezer recycling, and join the growing group of over 40 Energy Efficiency Program Sponsors nationwide now offering these types of programs.

Join us to *Make a Cool Change!*

We're here to help! If you need assistance or want to discuss ideas, contact your ENERGY STAR account manager or the campaign staff at [appliancecampaign@energystar.gov](mailto:appliancecampaign@energystar.gov) today. We want to share your great work, so tell us about your plans so we can promote your activities through the ENERGY STAR Web site and other vehicles.



★ How to get started:

- **Get on the list.** Notify your ENERGY STAR account manager or campaign staff at [appliancecampaign@energystar.gov](mailto:appliancecampaign@energystar.gov) about your existing refrigerator or freezer retirement or recycling program so it can be listed on the campaign Web site and in the ENERGY STAR special deals finder.
- **Promote the campaign in your materials and outreach efforts.**
- **Post an announcement and a link on your Web site.**
- **Add the campaign mark to your printed brochures.**
- Include information about the campaign in a **bill insert**.
- **If you do not offer a refrigerator or freezer recycling program, inform customers of other local recycling options**, such as municipal bulk-trash pick-up services.
- **Include information in community outreach activities**, such as booths, press releases, editorials, etc.
- **Tools, messages, digital buttons, campaign marks, etc., can be downloaded at [www.energystar.gov/recycle](http://www.energystar.gov/recycle).**

★ ★ More ideas to keep going:

- **Check to see if your state government will be offering appliance rebates using recently passed economic stimulus funds.**
- **If you don't already have an old fridge or freezer recycling program, start one.** Refer to the "How to Start a Refrigerator Recycling Program" resource on the campaign Web site.
- **Ask local television media to show consumers how to recycle their old fridge or freezer.** Suggest a consumer-interest story to educate viewers about the need and opportunity to recycle their old refrigerators and freezers; demonstrate proper recycling of an old unit from a garage, basement, or kitchen; and promote replacement with new ENERGY STAR qualified models, if needed. Consider developing a video for your Web site or YouTube™ posting.
- **Change out an old refrigerator or freezer in a visible community location**, workplace, school, community center, business, or home. Make it an event! Contact your local news outlets to invite them to cover the change-out event, and spread the word about how others can participate in your program.
- **Invite the public to your energy-efficiency fair** or community event(s), and demonstrate how much energy an old refrigerator or freezer uses. Show refrigerator recycling videos or photos.
- **Encourage businesses, government offices, schools, churches and other commercial customers to check their employee lunch areas for old refrigerators**, and to recycle and replace them with ENERGY STAR qualified models. Provide take-home campaign information to distribute to employees or members, as a reminder for them to check refrigerators at home, too.



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- **Help to educate the next generation**, by encouraging use of a teachers' guide and student worksheets, developed for the campaign by the National Energy Education Development Project (NEED). Consider hosting an appliance-recycling themed poster or bookmark contest or other activity to engage students, teachers, and parents.
- **Partner with appliance retailers** for the campaign, and provide local program information for in-store events. Consider providing incentives, such as utility rebates, for participants.
- **Facilitate a larger change-out effort for multi-family housing.** Apartment complexes may be looking for ways to save energy, money and enhance their image. Consider contacting apartment managers to encourage complex-wide change-outs if older fridges are still in use. Assist a partnership between a property manager, and a manufacturer or retailer to swap out all of their old refrigerators, create a story and promote the results. If needed, ENERGY STAR Quantity Quotes, [www.QuantityQuotes.net](http://www.QuantityQuotes.net), is a great resource for bulk purchases of new ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerators and freezers.

[www.energystar.gov/recycle](http://www.energystar.gov/recycle) (live early March 2009).

E-mail [appliancecampaign@energystar.gov](mailto:appliancecampaign@energystar.gov) or contact your ENERGY STAR account manager.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly the ENERGY STAR Recycle My Old Fridge Campaign, at [www.RecycleMyOldFridge.com](http://www.RecycleMyOldFridge.com).

<sup>2</sup> Source: Residential Energy Consumption Survey, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Source: D&R International, 2009.